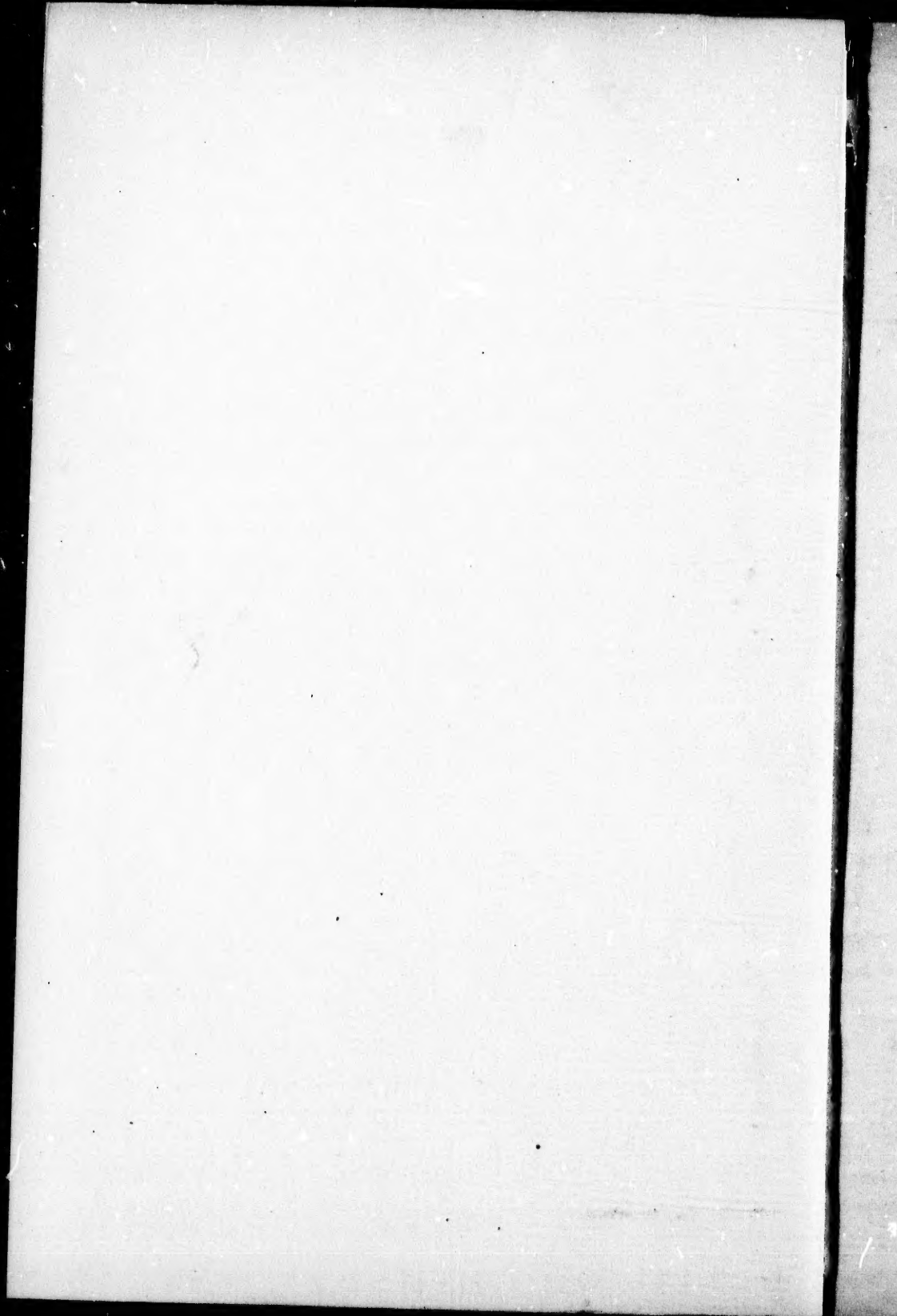




COLONIAL
MILITARY EXPENDITURE.

THREE SPEECHES
OF
ARTHUR MILLS, ESQ., M.P.

IN
THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

MARCH 5, 1861; MARCH 4, 1862; & APRIL 28, 1863.

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The three following Speeches have been reprinted from Hansard's Parliamentary Debates. The first was delivered in moving for a Select Committee on Colonial Military Expenditure; the second in moving a Resolution founded on the Report of that Committee; the third in calling attention to Correspondence respecting the Defences of Canada and New Zealand.

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SPEECH.

Mr. ARTHUR MILLS said, that in rising to move for a Select Committee on Colonial Military Expenditure, he need hardly apologise for bringing under the notice of the House a question involving an expenditure of nearly £4,000,000 sterling, nine-tenths of which were raised from the taxation of the people of this country. The usual official objection would probably be raised to the Select Committee for which he was about to ask—namely, that it would involve an interference on the part of Parliament with the proper functions of the Executive Government, but he thought he should be able, in a few words, to prove that that objection could not fairly apply to the Motion to which he asked the House to assent. In 1834, a Committee for the same object, was granted by the Government of that day. It was presided over by the present Lord Fortescue. On the Report of that Committee action was taken by the Government, to the great advantage of the public; but many changes had taken place since 1834—changes both in the home administration, and in the actual expenditure in the Colonies, which tended to make inquiry still more necessary than it was when granted at that date. From the beginning of the present century up to

1854 the administration of the Colonies and that of the War Department were under one head. In that year, owing to the pressure caused by the Russian war, the two departments were separated; and they had the testimony of men of experience, that under the present system great inconvenience was caused to the public service from the absence of any fixed or recognised principle in respect to colonial military expenditure. He did not intend to trouble the House with lengthy quotations, but he would refer to a passage in a letter, written in March, 1859, by Mr. Hawes, on behalf of the right hon. and gallant Member for Huntingdon (General Peel), then Secretary of State for War, to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. In that letter the Colonial Secretary's attention was called to the extreme inconvenience felt in the War Department by reason of the absence of any fixed and recognised principle on which to decide questions relating to military expenditure in the Colonies; and the desirability of a distinct understanding between the several Colonies and the Imperial Government was pointed out. It was suggested by the right hon. and gallant General that the matter should be submitted to the consideration of a Committee composed of one member from the War Office, one from the Colonial Office, and one from the Treasury. Such a Committee was accordingly appointed. They were all men of ability, but they presented a Report in which two members of the Committee materially

differed from their colleague. That seemed to have been made an excuse for doing nothing; but, at all events, no action had been taken on the subject. His object in now proposing the appointment of a Committee was not to embarrass the Government, but to give them a basis for action. The average annual expenditure incurred in the defence of the Dependencies, including transport, dead-weight, recruiting, and departmental expenses, was nearly £4,000,000* annually. Of that amount the Colonies contributed one-tenth. The Committee he proposed would have to operate only on that portion of the British Colonial Empire which comprised the "Colonies" properly so called. The political garrisons, convict depôts, and the philanthropic settlements in Western Africa, with regard to which the question of apportionment of expenditure did not arise, would be excluded from the inquiry. Whatever opinions might exist as to the value of these dependencies to Great Britain, it was evident that they must be retained, if at all, at Imperial cost. They were thirteen in number, and the cost of our military expenditure in regard to them was about £1,500,000, while there were twenty-four or twenty-five colonies and dependencies that absorbed

* For the years ending March 1858 and 1860, for which alone complete returns have been given, the totals including the Colonial contributions, are £3,968,599 and £3,594,305 respectively. For the current year the total cost (including that of the New Zealand war) will probably exceed £4,000,000.

the remainder. The total amount of contributions from Colonial sources towards making up the total sum was £370,000. The twenty-four colonial dependencies on which he proposed the Committee should operate contributed about £350,000 a year, and of that sum nearly £240,000 was contributed by three colonies, namely, Ceylon, Victoria, and New South Wales. This fact showed the inconsistent and inequitable results of the present system, both in regard to the Imperial expenditure and the proportions paid by the Colonies. Again, the military defence of the North American Colonies and the West Indies was organised on no established rule or principle. Vast sums were squandered on fortifications which were often worse than useless, while small garrisons were dotted about on our insular possessions which, in the event of war with European or other Powers, would be simply caught in traps. It was to him quite inconceivable that they should go on keeping fragments of troops in all the small dependencies that they possessed. The colonial power of England rested on her naval superiority alone. The Report of the Departmental Committee called attention to the enormous military expenditure at the Cape of Good Hope, amounting to £830,000, side by side with which was an item in the estimates of £68,000 for the civilization of the Kaffirs. Anything more monstrous than that expenditure of £830,000 he could not imagine, and he was quite at a loss to understand how Parliament

could sanction—if, indeed, it ever had sanctioned—such an enormous outlay. The tendency of such a system was to keep the colony in a state of perpetual minority. The Kaffir wars, again, had cost this country not less than £5,000,000. He brought forward this motion in no spirit of hostility to the Government, and he, therefore, regretted to hear that it was their intention to oppose it. That opposition, however, rendered it necessary for him to anticipate some of the arguments likely to be used against it. He should probably be told that the matter ought to be left to the Executive Government; and that it was not a question for the House of Commons. That was an argument which had been used for the last twenty-five years, and might be used with equal force for twenty-five years to come. But how could the Government deal with the matter satisfactorily when the average duration of office of each Colonial Minister was little more than eighteen months? Under such circumstances, unless some sound rules were laid down for that department, any statesman who held the seals of the Colonial Office must find great difficulty in giving satisfaction, either to colonists abroad or tax-payers at home. Many months often elapsed before the missives of the Colonial Office could reach the Colonies to which they were despatched; and when the time came for the return of the mail the Colonial Office had a new functionary, who might feel disposed to deal with the question at

issue on a different principle. The settlement of important questions between the Imperial Government and the Colonies was thus indefinitely delayed, and the seeds were thus sown for future disputes. The severance of the War Department from the Colonial Office had only aggravated the difficulty of the case. He disclaimed any desire to invade the functions of the Executive, but the whole history of the matter showed that it was high time for Parliament to interfere. He might be told that one Committee had already sat, that his Committee would do nothing, and that the Colonies would be coming before it *in formâ pauperis*, to get what they could for themselves. But persons who held this opinion of the Colonies must have forgotten their conduct during the Russian war, when the Australian colonies sent home upwards of £100,000 to the Patriotic Fund, for the widows and children of those who fell in the Crimea; and when Nova Scotia offered to maintain a militia of 25,000 men to protect her own shores, in the event of England requiring the services of her army elsewhere. It could not be said that the expenditure proposed to be inquired into was unimportant, for if £1,000,000 of the whole amount now expended could be saved, it represented 1*d* in the pound on the income tax, or it would enable the Chancellor of the Exchequer to take his long-deferred action on the paper duty. The student of history could not but notice the contrast between the Colonial

policy of England and that of Spain and Holland. He did not mention the colonial policy of the latter countries for any purpose of laudation, but it was worthy of remark that they received from their colonies every year nearly the precise sum that England spent upon hers. But it was not only, or mainly, on economical or financial grounds that an inquiry into our present colonial policy was demanded. The retention of colonies in an inglorious and unlovely subjection was a hopeless enterprise, degrading alike to those who imposed and to those who accepted the dominion. If we needed an illustration of the hopelessness of such a policy, it would be found in the history of Portuguese colonization, and its complete collapse. At this day, when the Azores and Madeira, Angola and Mozambique, with a few African Slave depôts, comprised the colonial roll of Portugal, it was difficult to realize the fact that there *was* an age when 40,000 armed Portuguese kept the ocean in awe from China to Morocco, and 150 Sovereign princes paid tribute to the treasury of Lisbon. It was not by soldiers, or warlike appliances, that the Colonial Empire of England was to be retained. Sixty years ago Mr. Fox, in advocating the Quebec Bill, told the House of Commons that the only sure mode of retaining our Colonies was to enable them to govern themselves. This advice had been echoed by the late Sir William Molesworth, Mr. Charles Buller, and some distinguished statesmen who were still

Members of that House. But to the privilege of self-government was necessarily attached the burden of self-defence, and the Colonies that were left to govern themselves ought, as a logical consequence, to defend themselves. It was not necessary to go back to ancient times to shew the accuracy of that theory. Our North American colonies, before the declaration of independence, paid the whole cost of their military defence, including forts and garrisons, out of their own taxes, and yet provided in addition for the whole expense of their civil government. During the seven years' war they raised, clothed, and paid 25,000 men, at a cost of several millions sterling. In the words of Franklin's evidence before the House of Commons in 1766, "They were governed at the expense to Great Britain of only a little pen, ink, and paper—they were led by a thread." The policy of England towards her Colonies ought to be, in accordance with this ancient precedent, to cherish the spirit of self-reliance, and to revive, if possible, the sound principle of Colonial Government from which we had departed. He submitted his motion to the consideration of the House, he repeated, in no hostile spirit towards the Government, but because he believed that that man was doing a service to his country who was instrumental in diminishing the drain on the resources of the State, and lightening the burden which pressed on the population—a burden in this case involving not only an enormous expenditure, but the withdrawal

of 100,000 soldiers (including that portion of the Imperial army now employed in India) from the service of England and the development of her industrial resources, to the outlying provinces of our empire. But there was a still more powerful argument for investigating and reforming our colonial policy—namely, that by cherishing those principles of self-reliance to which he had adverted, they would be qualifying the Colonies, which had proved their powers both of self-government and self-defence, for a glorious future and for eventual independence.

He would, therefore, move,

“That a Select Committee be appointed on Colonial Military Expenditure, to inquire and report whether any and what alterations may be advantageously adopted in reference to the Defence of the British Dependencies, and the proportions of cost of such Defence as now defrayed from Imperial and Colonial funds respectively.”

After a debate (in which Mr. Adderley, Mr. Baxter, Lord Robert Cecil, Mr. Chichester Fortescue, Mr. Marsh, and Lord Palmerston took part), the Motion having been adopted by the House, a Select Committee was nominated on the 18th of March, consisting of the following Members:—General Peel, Mr. Ellice, Sir George Grey, Lord Stanley, Mr. Roebuck, Mr. Childers, Mr. Chichester Fortescue, Mr. Thomas George Baring, Mr. Adderley, Lord Robert Cecil, Mr. Baxter, Mr.

Marsh, Mr. Fitzgerald, Sir James Fergusson, and Mr. Arthur Mills.

The Committee having considered the matters to them referred, and having examined the Chief and Assistant Under-Secretaries for War and the Colonies, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Inspector-General of Fortifications, Naval and Military Officers, and other witnesses connected both officially and otherwise with various Colonies, presented, on the 11th of July, 1861, a Report which, together with the Minutes of Evidence and documents appended thereto, has been printed by order of the House of Commons.

The Report of the Committee divides the British Dependencies (exclusive of India) into two classes, 1. Colonies proper; and 2. Military garrisons, naval stations, convict depôts, and Dependencies maintained chiefly for objects of Imperial policy.

The Committee submit the following, among other recommendations, as founded on the evidence laid before them:—

(1.) That in the case of the Australian Colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, and Tasmania, the number of Imperial Troops ought to be reduced.

(2.) That with respect to New Zealand, while it may not be right, under all circumstances, to withhold from the settlers in that Colony assistance in protecting themselves against the attacks of native

tribes, so long as the Imperial Government retains a control over native policy ; their principal reliance ought to be on their own resources.

(3.) That with respect to the South African Colonies, and all those similarly circumstanced dependencies which contain large European populations, their security against warlike tribes or domestic disturbances should be provided for, as far as possible, by means of local efforts and local organization ; and that the main object of any system adopted by this country should be to encourage such efforts, not merely with a view to diminish Imperial expenditure, but for the still more important purpose of stimulating the spirit of self-reliance in Colonial communities.

(4.) That the settlers in South Africa should be called upon to contribute a larger sum than they do at present towards the military expenditure of those colonies.

(5.) That the expense of the troops in Ceylon should be in a greater degree borne by the Colonial Treasury.

(6.) That with respect to the West Indies, it appears that about 4,200 troops (consisting of European and coloured regiments, in nearly equal proportions), are now maintained there, mainly for the purpose of securing those colonies against internal disorder ; that the defence in time of war of these possessions of the British Crown, as well as of other distant colonies, must be principally naval, and that

it is for many reasons inexpedient that the duty of a local police should be performed by scattered detachments of Imperial troops, at the cost of this country ; it is therefore, in the opinion of the Committee, desirable that, due regard being had to the peculiar circumstances of these Colonies, the force now maintained in them should be gradually reduced.

(7.) That in the opinion of the Committee the multiplication of fortified places and the erection of fortifications in distant Colonial possessions, such as Mauritius, on a scale requiring for their defence a far greater number of men than could be spared for them in the event of war, involve a useless expenditure, and fail to provide an efficient protection for places, the defence of which mainly depends on superiority at sea.

(8.) In conclusion, the Committee submit that the tendency of modern warfare is to strike blows at the heart of a hostile power ; and that it is therefore desirable to concentrate the troops required for the defence of the United Kingdom as much as possible, and to trust mainly to naval supremacy for securing against foreign aggression the distant dependencies of the Empire.

SPEECH

ON MOVING A RESOLUTION FOUNDED ON THE
REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE.

March 4, 1862.

MR. ARTHUR MILLS said, that he rose for the purpose of calling the attention of the House to the Report of the Select Committee of last Session upon Colonial Military Expenditure. It would be recollected that that Committee was instructed to inquire and report whether any and what alterations might be advantageously adopted in regard to the defence of the British dependencies, and the proportions of cost of such defence as now defrayed from Imperial and Colonial funds respectively. That Committee had been very impartially selected, and comprised many hon. Members who had devoted much attention to the subject. The question being at once of a financial, colonial, and military nature, the heads of the Colonial Department, the Secretary for War, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Inspector-General of Fortifications, and other experienced witnesses (among them Lord Grey and several gentlemen who had held office under Home and Colonial Governments) had been examined, and all the attainable evidence which appeared to have any

bearing upon the question had been taken by the Committee. The result was, that a Report was presented to the House which, in all its main recommendations, he might say, had been unanimously adopted. That Report was now on the table of the House. Before alluding to the motion which stood in his name, and which was founded on the recommendations of that Committee, he might be allowed to disclaim the imputations which had been too freely cast upon those hon. Members who had thought it their duty to take any active part in reducing our colonial military expenditure. It had been said that those who, whether in or out of Parliament, ventilated this question, in which the Dependencies and the parent State were alike interested, were, in fact, aiming at the dismemberment of our Colonial Empire. For his own part and that of the Committee, he entirely disavowed any such intention. Throughout the inquiry it was not only assumed that Great Britain desired to maintain her Colonial Empire, but that she aimed at developing the resources of her Colonies, and qualifying them for present self-government and eventual independence. It was also assumed by the Committee that Great Britain recognised the claim of all portions of the British Empire to Imperial protection from perils arising from the consequences of Imperial policy, and that the naval assistance of England was essential—indeed, was the only substantial protection which the Colonial Empire could expect to receive from the Imperial Government. But the Committee never entered into any question which would

at all involve the dismemberment of our Colonial Empire, or invite a policy which would tend to the premature severance of a single province which now volunteered allegiance to the British Crown. Though the terms of the reference were very wide, embracing in the comprehensive term 'Dependencies' all the outlying portions of the Empire, India, the Mediterranean garrisons, the West African Settlements for the suppression of the slave trade, and all the military and naval stations wheresoever situate, the Committee thought it best not to extend their investigation to those stations which were maintained for Imperial purposes, and which must necessarily be maintained, if at all, at Imperial cost, but to limit their inquiry to those which came strictly under the designation of 'Colonies.' The area of inquiry, therefore, comprised the North American Colonies, the Australian Colonies (with the exception of Western Australia), the West Indies, the Cape of Good Hope, New Zealand, the Mauritius, and Ceylon. His hon. friend the Member for Montrose (Mr. Baxter) had given notice of an amendment by way of addition to the motion now before the House with reference to fortifications. He would merely remark, therefore, that the main evidence given before the Committee on that subject related to the Mauritius, and tended to show that while enormous expenditure had been incurred, it was extremely doubtful whether the works that had been carried out would ever prove of the least utility to the Imperial Government. Upon the question of fortifications, a resolution was passed

which conveyed the opinion of the Committee ; and if any hon. Member would take the trouble to read the evidence of Lord Herbert, Lord Grey, Admiral Erskine, and others, they would, he believed, agree with him in thinking that the paragraph taken from the Report of the Committee was well founded. But to return to the motion of which he had given notice :—Hon. Members might consider that his resolution was a mere abstract proposition, and that the adoption of it by the House would be either superfluous or mischievous ; but he begged to say that the opinions embodied in the resolution were by no means original, but opinions which had been publicly expressed by Lord Grey in his official correspondence with Lord Elgin and other statesmen of high eminence in this country, and were to be found in the despatches of Sir William Denison, one of the ablest of our Colonial governors. They had been supported by the right hon. and gallant Member for Huntingdon (General Peel), who stated, when the Departmental Committee on Colonial Military Expenditure was appointed, that this country ought to assist the Colonies against external aggressions, and, in a lesser degree, against the attacks of formidable tribes ; but that in no case, except where the Colonies were mere garrisons, should the mother country assume the whole responsibility of their defence. That principle had been also fully supported by the evidence of Lord Herbert, who stated that, instead of keeping the troops scattered about the British Dependencies, he would concentrate them more at home ; and that the main-

tenance of large garrisons in the Colonies furnished them with an excellent excuse for not raising any militia of their own. He would also refer to the evidence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who gave it as his opinion that the fact of the parent State undertaking the defence of the Colonies had an enervating and mischievous effect upon the latter; and likewise to that of Lord Grey, who maintained that the introduction of the system of self-government into the Colonies made a material difference in respect to the policy to be pursued, and that power and responsibility ought to go together. There were differences in the different groups of Colonies both as regarded their internal resources of defence, and their exposure to external perils; but the principle set forth in his resolution was the right principle on which the Government should act in dealing with the Colonial Empire. All the witnesses examined by the Committee had agreed that where responsible government was given to a Colony the primary responsibility of its military defence should also be cast upon it. That was the principle he had embodied in his resolution. He admitted that to enunciate a sound principle and to carry it into practical operation were two different things; but he did not admit, as some were prepared to contend, that they must submit in despair to the condition of things now existing; and that, as in giving the Colonies responsible government no contract was made that the Colonies should undertake their self-defence, therefore the whole cost of the defence of the Colonies must for ever

be borne by the mother country. Was it for a moment to be contended that because no clause had been inserted in the Act or Order in Council which conferred representative government on a Colony, expressly stipulating for its self-defence, that burden was eternally to rest on the parent State, whatever power or wealth the Colony so circumstanced might attain? He protested against that argument as altogether unsound, and maintained that the acceptance by the Colonies of the advantage of self-government implied at the same time a compact on their part to undertake their own defence against all perils, except those to which they might be exposed by the results of Imperial policy, and, at all events, to provide for their own internal order and security. But it was said that, after all, the Colonies of Great Britain, though they might be expensive to the parent State, could only be regarded as prodigal sons, and must be treated accordingly. He denied that the parental analogy held good at all; but if it did, the only successful mode he knew of treating a prodigal son was to throw him upon his own resources. It was said, again, by some, that in certain Colonies, such for instance as New Zealand and the Cape, the colonists must not be left to deal single-handed with the natives, as in that case scenes would result which would arouse the indignation of the people of England; but he thought that after trusting the Colonies with the entire management of their own affairs, it was an insult to them to insinuate that in collisions with the natives they would resort to barbarous and disgraceful practices.

With respect to the argument as to the inhumanity of throwing our Colonies on their own resources in the matter of their defence, he could only say it was criminal to give them the right of self-government if they were totally incapable of protecting themselves; and he believed that so long as we went on giving them unlimited power to draw on the Imperial army in the case of every quarrel of their own, there could be no certainty that we should not have a perpetual succession of Kaffir wars, which had already cost this country five millions sterling, and similar difficulties in other portions of our Empire. There was, moreover, an additional and cogent reason for compelling the Colonists to take upon themselves the main responsibility of keeping themselves out of those quarrels. The commissariat expenditure in these wars was enormous, and the Colonists had a direct interest in the increase of these expenses. Sir Harry Smith said, speaking of an unsuccessful attempt on the Cape frontier to capture Sandilli, 'This bit of a brush with Sandilli cost us 56,000*l.* in waggon hire alone.' That outlay all went into the pockets of the Colonists at Cape Town. He did not blame the Colonists for endeavouring to put money into their pockets when they could get it out of the commissariat expenditure; but he did blame the Imperial Government for perpetuating the present system of keeping the Colonies in a state of everlasting minority and childish dependence. The fact was, that our present system was not only far more extravagant but little less cruel than the old Commando system.

Not many years ago the 12th Lancers were almost massacred in an impenetrable thorn-bush on the Cape frontier, on a service on which it was inhuman to employ them; and, according to the evidence of Mr. Owen, whose experience in the command of frontier levies in that Colony gave weight to his opinion, it seemed that there was little to choose between the old system and the modern one on the ground of philanthropy. In New Zealand a peculiar difficulty existed, and the result of the present system was, that Sir George Grey was placed in a most anomalous position—that of having to serve two masters—the Imperial Government and the Legislative Assembly. He knew it might be alleged that the troubles in which the Colonists became involved were in a great measure the result of Imperial policy, but there could be no doubt that the hostilities had for the most part a purely local origin; and he did not see why the Government and the people of this country should have for ever to undertake the defence of the Colonies in wars in which they might engage from motives which we could not gauge, and under a policy which we could not control. It appeared to him that it was a case in which we must either go forward, and leave the Colonies more to their own resources, or draw back, and deprive them of the privileges of self-government. But that latter course was now practically impossible. He confessed that he was not of those who were disposed to indulge in sarcastic observations on the mode in which our Colonists had made use of their free institutions, for

he could make a large allowance for the many and great difficulties with which they had to contend in attempting to carry out a system of government for which they had undergone no previous preparation; and he entertained sanguine hopes, that under a sounder policy they would prove themselves to be as well qualified to bear the burdens as to exercise the privileges of freedom. But perhaps he might be told that a correct theory was one thing and that its practical application was another; and he might be asked what course he would recommend the Imperial Government to pursue in the matter. The system he would suggest would be to leave off the undignified haggling with local Governments, hitherto of such frequent occurrence, and which had invariably ended in bitter recriminations, and often in Imperial humiliation, and pursue the course adopted by Lord Grey in the case of our Australian Colonies some ten or twelve years ago—namely, that of simply announcing to them that certain aid would be allowed them by the Imperial Government in the shape of troops from England; and that if more than that was required, it must be at their own expense. If that principle were adhered to, the Colonists would not be so ready to involve themselves in war, and would be rather more circumspect in their dealings with the native population, and the Imperial Government would be spared the everlasting drain which was made upon its treasury for the defence of the Colonies. He might be told that the present was a very inopportune moment for saying anything that could possibly give offence to

our Colonists. So far as our North American Colonies were concerned, he admired, in common with others, the spirit which they had recently displayed; nor should he have complained if even a larger number of troops had been sent out there during the winter for the reinforcement of the garrisons; but he begged to remind the House that in those Colonies there were from 80,000 to 90,000 Volunteers either already trained or in course of training, and he regretted very much that these defensive operations had not been sooner commenced. He hoped Canada would never forget that the training of her militia was a matter of the greatest importance, and one which deeply affected her own security. All our Colonies, indeed, should be made to feel that they were primarily responsible for their own defence against all dangers in which their own and not our Imperial policy had involved them. He might mention that about three years ago a member of the Legislature of New South Wales moved a resolution, which was carried by a majority of 39 to 11, in almost precisely the same terms as that which he had now the honour to submit to the House. If, in a Colonial Legislature, such a proposition was moved and carried, it could not be regarded as discourteous to the Colonies that the Imperial Parliament should adopt a similar resolution. He hoped the House would believe that he had not intended to utter a single word which could be considered as discourteous or unfriendly towards the citizens of any portion of our Colonial Empire. So far from wishing to alienate

the Colonies, or to prejudice their interests, his object was to draw closer the bonds of alliance which united them with the mother country, and to qualify them for all the rights, privileges, and duties of self-government. He concluded by moving, 'That this House, while it fully recognises the claim of all portions of the British Empire on Imperial aid against perils arising from the consequences of Imperial policy, is of opinion that Colonies exercising the rights of self-government ought to undertake the main responsibility of providing for their own internal order and security.'

After a debate (in which Mr. Buxton, Mr. Baxter, Mr. Chichester Fortescue, Sir James Ferguson, Mr. Haliburton, and Mr. Childers took part), the resolution, with an addition moved by Mr. Baxter, was unanimously agreed to.

SPEECH

ON CALLING ATTENTION TO DESPATCHES ON THE
DEFENCES OF CANADA AND NEW ZEALAND.

April 28, 1863.

MR. ARTHUR MILLS said, he rose to call attention to the correspondence which had recently been laid before Parliament between Her Majesty's Government and the Governors of Canada and of New Zealand respectively, concerning the military defences of those Colonies. In the course of the discussions which had taken place on the Army Estimates he (Mr. Arthur Mills) had been requested by several hon. Members to originate a debate in which the general question of the relations between Great Britain and her Colonies, in respect to the defence of the Empire, might fairly be raised. A more appropriate text for such a discussion could not, in his opinion, be suggested, than the correspondence to which he alluded, relating, it was true, to two Colonies very differently circumstanced, but pointing, nevertheless, to precisely the same political conclusions. It was sometimes insinuated that those who ventured to impugn the extravagant and unstatesmanlike principles which had governed our Colonial policy were, in fact, aiming at the abandonment of our dominions. For his own part,

he (Mr. Mills) could only disclaim any desire to alienate the allegiance of any of the Colonies, or to precipitate the dismemberment of the Empire, while, on the other hand, he did not desire to retain them in subjection one hour longer than they chose. Nor had he any wish to enter into the question of Colonial party politics, which more particularly belonged to the colonists themselves. He would briefly state the facts of the case to which he wished to call attention.

During the last year a Commission had been appointed in Canada, consisting of eight members, seven of whom, he believed, were Canadians, to inquire into the defences of Canada. They recommended to the local Parliament that a militia force of 50,000 men should be raised and trained, together with a reserve force of the same number. He believed that the recommendation of the Commissioners was unanimous. A Bill was brought in to carry it out, but the Canadian Parliament did not adopt it. And instead of a local force of 50,000 men they embodied and trained only 15,000—not much more than one-fourth of the force recommended by their own Commission as absolutely essential for the defence of the Colony. At the present moment there were little more than the above named number of volunteers and militia men armed, equipped, and partially trained in Canada. In addition to the local force of 15,000, there were about 12,000 Imperial troops in Canada, including two battalions of Guards and the Canadian Rifles, borne on the strength of the British army.

The Canadians justified themselves for their apparent shortcomings in self-defence, on the ground that they were in no danger, and did not think they ought to submit to the inconvenience and expense of raising a large force when they were in no peril. He admitted that the Canadians were the best judges as to whether they were in peril or not. But he would put the case thus. They were either in peril or they were not. If they were in peril, then they ought to have raised a larger force for the defence of the province, for if Canada were really in danger of invasion, it was worse than ridiculous to suppose that a frontier of 1,000 miles, affailable by land or water at every point, could be adequately protected against the incursions of a hostile army by ten or a dozen British regiments, unsupported by an adequate local force. If they were not in peril, then they did not require 10,000 or 12,000 Imperial troops in Canada, whose expense was defrayed by the taxpayers of this country.

It might be said that to advocate the withdrawal of the troops from Canada would, on grounds of Imperial policy, be to make a monstrous proposition; but when the House of Commons accepted, by a formal Resolution last year, the liability of England for the protection of her Colonies from perils occasioned by 'Imperial policy,' could it be contended for a moment that Canada was thereby released from all responsibility for her own defence? If England had bombarded New York or Portland, or any city on the American seaboard, and had

thereby provoked an attack on Canada, England would undoubtedly be bound to bear the brunt of such an invasion as her own policy had invited ; but he should wish to know in what estimation the loyalty of the Canadians was to be held, if they showed no sympathy with us in such cases, for example, as that of the *Trent*, in which an insult to the British flag involved an insult to every citizen of the empire over which that flag waved ; nor could he understand upon what grounds the inhabitants of a wealthy and prosperous Colony could be justified in casting upon the mother country the whole of the responsibility which she was willing to share with them.

The relations which ought to subsist between this country and Canada in respect to the question of her defence had, he thought, been very well laid down in a despatch of the Duke of Newcastle, in which he stated that the main security against aggression which the latter enjoyed, consisted in the fact that a war with Canada meant a war with England, but that it did not therefore follow that England could afford to maintain there an unlimited number of troops, while it still remained true that the defence of Canadian territory must mainly depend on the Canadians themselves.

In bringing the subject forward he was not actuated by any spirit of hostility to Her Majesty's Government ; on the contrary, he introduced it because he believed the executive Government of this country needed the support of Parliament in carrying on a correspondence in which it appeared

from the papers, Canada had acted the part rather of a hostile power than of an integral portion of the empire. The total sum paid by the Parliament and people of Canada in 1862, for the various purposes to which he had referred, was only between 60,000*l.* and 70,000*l.* as against a sum (exclusive of extras) paid by this country of little less than a million sterling. But this was not a cause in which Imperial England could be called upon to bargain and wrangle with a dependency to which she had conceded the full privileges of freedom. In the right solution of this question were involved the interests and safety of Canada, far more closely than those of the Parent State. He did not think that they ought to be carrying on protracted negotiations on the subject with the Government of Canada. He considered that the time was come for taking a more decisive attitude, and for putting an end to the undignified and unsatisfactory wrangling between the Secretary of State and the Parliament of Canada—whether by the Canadians increasing their militia force or the Government of England withdrawing the troops from Canada he did not pretend to say; but one of those two courses ought in the interests of Canada, no less than of England, to be immediately adopted.

Passing from Canada to New Zealand, he might observe that though the case of the latter Colony was widely different from that of Canada, they were almost identical in that both were nearly independent. The colony of New Zealand had possessed a Constitution for ten years. When that

Constitution was granted, the Crown thought proper to make a reservation with reference to the right of dealing with the native races—not in the spirit of interference with the powers of the local Parliament, but in obedience to the principles which had actuated this country in dealing with those portions of the empire which were inhabited by warlike tribes. Whether that reservation was wisely made or otherwise he would not discuss, but its effect had been from that time forward to throw nearly every expense incurred for the defence of the colony upon the Imperial Government.

The intricate and complicated question of New Zealand native policy, with its unpronounceable names and unintelligible distinctions was a field of discussion on which he (Mr. Mills) had no desire to invite the House of Commons now to enter; but he would venture to ask one question—Was the claim on the part of the people or the Legislature of New Zealand well founded? They said, ‘You, the Crown of England, by your representatives, have been meddling in Colonial affairs, so you must bear all the responsibility of conflicts with the natives.’ But to what extent, as compared with the Colonial Legislature, had the Crown of England interfered? In 1858 alone, no less than four Acts dealing with the natives were passed in the Colonial Legislature, none of which were disallowed or interfered with, but received the Royal assent. The Imperial Parliament, during the last six years, had only passed two Acts of any importance—one by which the Queen relinquished any *scintilla* of power

that might previously have been reserved, and the other guaranteeing a loan of half a million to New Zealand. In the mean time, the war expenditure occasioned by settling disputes in which we, as a nation, had not the minutest interest, had been almost entirely borne by Great Britain. For five years negotiations had been carried on between successive Secretaries of State in England and the New Zealand Government with the object of inducing the Colony to pay the moderate sum of 5% a man for the soldiers employed in its defence. Every one of those soldiers cost England 100% per man per annum, and it was sought to make New Zealand bear one-twentieth of their cost. Sanguine economists hoped that such an arrangement had been effected, but it would appear from the latest accounts that of the proportion of 35,000% to be sustained for the year 1862 by the Colony, 25,000% were swept away by various deductions, leaving only 10,000% to be contributed by the Colony towards the vast military expenditure of which Sir George Grey spoke in the following terms :—

The rate of military expenditure now going on, allowing nothing for the cost of operations in the field, amounts to nearly 400,000% a year, and to this a sum of 260,000% will have to be added for each six months' operation in the field, or a sum of 520,000% a year, making a total of 920,000% a year if operations are continued ; and I concur with the Lieutenant-General in thinking that the sum actually expended would be more likely to exceed than to fall short of this sum. When to this amount are added the sums due to the services not included in the Estimates the total military expenditure will be very largely increased.

The Colonial Treasurer, moreover, gravely suggested that no present attempt should be made to meet these liabilities, but, after the native difficulty was at an end, and the respective proportions to be borne by the Imperial Government and the Colony had been ascertained, that a loan should be raised to cover the latter. The practical inference to be drawn from the correspondence was, in his mind, that the time had come, not for negotiation, not for despatch writing, but for distinct and definite action. That action need not involve any hardship upon the people of New Zealand. The case was argued as if England was leaving the Colonists to their fate, or, still worse, leaving the Colonists to murder the Maoris, a supposition which was shocking to those philanthropists who before contended for the granting of representative institutions to those very Colonists, and for absolute rights of self-government. Surely, if men were capable of managing their own affairs, they ought to know how to behave in face of a warlike race like the Maoris. Nor was it less than a libel on the 100,000 European inhabitants of New Zealand to insinuate that even if they were left to fight their own battles with the 50,000 natives of that Colony, the result would be an indiscriminate massacre in the cause of civilisation. He did not say that England would be able to retire altogether from these contests, but if the Colonists, without being deserted, were taught to lean more on themselves, there would be fewer disturbances, and they would behave with greater circumspection towards the native race, knowing

that they would no longer be backed up in all their unrighteous claims.

Accusations of injustice might be levelled against the Parent State, for practically enforcing the doctrine, that Englishmen who, as Colonists, have voluntarily taken up their lot in distant lands, must accept the risks of their own acts together with their presumed advantages; but it must be remembered that the relations of England towards her Colonies had entirely changed. She could no longer legislate for them; she could not recall the days when they were bound to her by exclusive commercial treaties, or when they were compelled to receive her criminal population. The question in the present day was no longer whether Great Britain should tax her Colonies, but to what extent the Colonies should be permitted to tax Great Britain. The problem to be solved involved not merely a compensating adjustment of burdens as between Great Britain and her dependencies, but the graver question whether the inhabitants of the British islands (an area of less than 130,000 square miles) could for ever undertake the defence of a scattered empire of 4,000,000 square miles, spread over all quarters of the earth. Men were now asking, very naturally, whether, at this time especially of severe commercial distress at home, the distant Colonies of our Empire were to be permitted permanently to garrison their frontiers with our troops, while they excluded our manufactures from their markets. He believed that Great Britain had it in her power to retain her Colonies not in a subjugation, like that of

the Colonies of ancient Rome, by stringent laws, and vast armies, but in an affectionate and far more enduring allegiance. If the Home Government were really about to inaugurate a better system, he believed, that so far from the days of their Colonial empire being numbered, the affections of the Colonies for the mother country would be more closely cemented than if they continued to be alternately dandled and overawed. The Colonies had shown the most generous feelings towards the mother country by their benevolent contributions during the Russian war, the Indian mutiny, and now during the distress in the cotton districts. What they had now to be taught by a resolute and decisive policy on the part of that House was that communities must share in the burdens and responsibilities, if they would participate in the privileges, of free men. The hon. Member concluded by moving an Address for the Correspondence.

